



## Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council

[www.highlands.state.nj.us](http://www.highlands.state.nj.us)

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### Press Release

For Immediate Release

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#### **Senate Confirms New Highlands Council Members**

Chester, NJ- The New Jersey Senate today confirmed two new Highlands Council members, bringing the number of filled positions to fourteen. Hunterdon County Freeholder Erik Peterson and Passaic County Freeholder Tahesha Way both sailed through the process at a critical period of Highlands Council activity.

Tahesha Way, a Democrat from Passaic County, is a practicing attorney from Wayne Township. She will fill the unexpired term of Lois Cuccinello. Ms Way's interest in the environment goes back to her law school days when she was a member of the Virginia Environmental Law Journal. As a freeholder, she brings a county-wide perspective from the Highlands region's most densely populated county. She is married and has three children.

Erik Peterson, a Republican from Hunterdon County, replaces Eileen Swan. Mr. Peterson's freeholder responsibilities include serving as liaison to parks and recreation, advisor to the Rutgers cooperative extension of Hunterdon, and member of the shade tree commission. In addition to serving as Freeholder, Mr. Peterson has a law practice in Flemington and lives in Milford with his wife and three children.

Council chairman John Weingart hailed the action saying, "Tahesha and Erik value open space preservation and bring an enthusiasm for the Council's mission."

The Council is in the final stages of developing its Regional Master Plan draft, due out next month. The Plan is essential to fulfilling the Highland Act's purpose of protecting and preserving the drinking water of most New Jersey residents.

*In August 2004, the New Jersey Legislature enacted the Highland Water Protection and Planning Act in order to protect over 850,000 acres which supply drinking water for more than sixty-five percent of New Jersey's residents. The Highlands Act created the Highlands Council as a regional planning entity charged with protecting the water resources and natural beauty of the*

*New Jersey Highlands while allowing for planned, sustainable development and redevelopment of the region. The fifteen Council members include a broad and representative range of elected officials from Highlands municipalities and counties, as well as individuals with diverse backgrounds and area perspectives.*

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